

Basics of Volunteer Engagement and Introductory VolunteerMatch Training

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Get Started with VolunteerMatch!

8 Easy Steps for Recruiting Online

- Make the Title Work for You
 - Catchy, Fun, Interesting
- Keep it Brief
 - One Opportunity, 100 words
- Word it Simply and Make it Easy to Understand
 - No Jargon, no acronyms
- Make an Impact
 - Include a Strong Call to Action

8 Easy Steps for Recruiting Online

- Provide Direction and Support
 - Time Commitment, Training, Restrictions
- Make it Visually Appealing
 - Include Pictures, Graphics. Make use of White Space.
- Remember to Edit
 - Grammar, Spelling
- View your Listing as a Volunteer
 - Use a Critical Eye.

- Title Stands Out
 - Call to Action
- Make Good Use of First Sentence
 - Visible to prospective volunteers
- Brainstorm and Use Keywords
 - What kinds of volunteers do you want to find you
- Keep Referrals on VolunteerMatch
 - Information is only useful if volunteers click 'I Want to Help!'

Volunteer Retention and Program Evaluation

Keep the Volunteers You Have

Why do some volunteers leave and others stay?

- Difference in expectations
 - Organizational culture
 - Work v job description
 - Time commitment
 - Communication and style
 - Program support and training
 - Motivation and philosophy
- Maintain the relationship
 - Identify and address signs of disengagement
- Volunteers have lives, too. You can't plan for life.

- An accurate position description can help you recruit and keep more of the right volunteers.
- Clear positions and responsibilities can help mitigate difficult situations with volunteers.
 - Everyone is on the same page.
 - Give your volunteers room to grow
 - Graded or leveled positions, leadership positions, an opportunity to take on more responsibility or have a role to work towards.
 - Program managers and team leaders can better understand how volunteers fit into the organization.
 - Build support for volunteers, and the work they do.

Saying Thank You

- Create a culture of appreciation.
 - Incorporate impact into your thank you
- How a volunteer wants to be recognized is unique to each volunteer.
 - Ask! - Survey, questionnaire. What would they like to do, learn, see?
 - Recognize professional work in meaningful ways - Credit, public acknowledgement, portfolio
 - Don't underestimate a heartfelt, handwritten note - Created by clients or staff

Evaluating your Impact

Quantitative impact is important. Think about what you can measure

- Number of volunteers
- Hours worked
- Clients served, or client satisfaction

But numbers are only the beginning...

Evaluating your Impact

Qualitative impact is important too.

- Short term impacts
- Long term impacts
- What's different or better because of volunteers?
- How can you tell the story of why what volunteers do is important.

Share this information – with your volunteers, other staff members, clients, patrons, the community!



Plan for Success



- Identify Stakeholders
 - Board, Exec. Management, Program Managers, Paid Staff, Volunteer Staff
- Communicate to create buy-in
 - How could the impact of staff members, programs, the organization be expanded by engaging volunteers?
- Reach out to your champions

Identify Stakeholders

- Who plays a role in your organization? How do they feel about engaging volunteers in new ways?
- Stakeholders could be organization leadership, staff, volunteers, or donors.
 - Assess where each stakeholder is on the engagement continuum
 - “I’m evaluating our volunteer engagement program. I’d love to get your ideas”
 - One on one conversations
 - Opportunity for you to learn – don’t defend or attempt to change minds
 - Group stakeholders into champions, those seeking more information, and those opposed to expanding volunteer engagement.

Create a Communication Plan

Based on your volunteer engagement continuum create a plan for each group or each individual stakeholder.

- What type of information should be included?
 - Quantitative – volunteer hours, number of clients served
 - Qualitative – quotes or feedback from clients
 - Opportunity for volunteer engagement
- Internal communication and external communication
 - Different audiences need different styles and tones – overarching message should be the same.
- Formal and informal communication channels
 - Newsletter – formal, external facing. Who is included on the mailing list?
 - Email/social media – less formal, internal and external
 - Daily conversations/communication – informal

Starting an Action Plan

First, assess your stakeholder continuum.

- Identify your champions
- Assess the barriers
 - Attitudes
 - Staff, money and other resources
 - Where can you make progress, and where are the big walls?
- Is there an natural starting point or path for action?
 - Remember where you want to go – 5 year strategic plan

Working from your starting point identify the milestones or benchmarks that will help you achieve your plan.

- Engagement goals
 - New volunteer opportunities, new programs/departments using volunteers
- Communication goals
 - Internal communication strategies, external communication strategies
- Volunteer program goals
 - Leadership opportunities within volunteer program

Create a Timeline

When can you complete your benchmarks? Be realistic – you still have to accomplish the rest of your job.

- Engage volunteers to help you
 - You remove the barriers, volunteers build the program
- Leadership volunteers can help build the plan
 - New roles for volunteers
 - New opportunities for volunteers to use skills
 - Model the volunteer engagement you want to see

Make your Plan a Reality!

Remember the strategies for success.

- Start small and work with your champions
- Refer back to your strategic plan and goals.
 - It's okay to reevaluate where you're going as the program starts to evolved.
- Don't get discouraged
 - Tout your successes and evaluate and learn from your mistakes.

Learning Center

Find upcoming webinar dates, how-to videos and more

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/learningcenter/>

VolunteerMatch Community

Ask and answer questions after the webinar – use keywords Volunteer Management

<http://community.volunteermatch.org/volunteer>

California Library Get Involved Resource Center:

Videos, sample documents, policies, and position descriptions, photos and more!

<http://www.library.ca.gov/lds/getinvolved.html>

Thanks for attending!

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